

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO  
WESTERN DIVISION

DIANA MILLER, :  
 :  
Plaintiff, : Case No. 3:13cv00001  
 :  
vs. : JUDGE WALTER H. RICE  
 :  
COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SECURITY, :  
 :  
Defendant. :

---

DECISION AND ENTRY REJECTING REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE (DOC. #11) IN THEIR ENTIRETY;  
PLAINTIFF'S OBJECTIONS TO SAID JUDICIAL FILING (DOC. #12)  
SUSTAINED; JUDGMENT TO BE ENTERED IN FAVOR OF PLAINTIFF AND  
AGAINST DEFENDANT COMMISSIONER, REVERSING COMMISSIONER'S  
DECISION THAT PLAINTIFF WAS NOT DISABLED AND, THEREFORE, NOT  
ENTITLED TO BENEFITS UNDER THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT, AND  
REMANDING THE CAPTIONED CAUSE TO THE DEFENDANT  
COMMISSIONER FOR THE PAYMENT OF BENEFITS CONSISTENT WITH  
THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT; TERMINATION ENTRY

---

Plaintiff has brought this action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) to review a decision of the Defendant Commissioner denying Plaintiff's application for Social Security disability benefits. On January 29, 2014, the United States Magistrate Judge filed a Report and Recommendations (Doc. #11), recommending that the Commissioner's decision that Plaintiff was not disabled and, therefore, not entitled to benefits under the Social Security Act be affirmed. Based upon reasoning and citations of authority and to the record set forth in the Plaintiff's Objections to the Magistrate Judge's Report and Recommendations (Doc. #12), as well as upon a thorough de novo review of this Court's file, including the Administrative Transcript (Doc. #6), and a thorough review of the

applicable law, this Court rejects the aforesaid Report and Recommendations in their entirety and, in so doing, orders the entry of judgment in favor of the Plaintiff and against the Defendant Commissioner, concluding that the Commissioner's decision that Plaintiff was not disabled and, therefore, not entitled to benefits under the Social Security Act was not supported by substantial evidence. The Plaintiff's Objections to said judicial filing (Doc. #12) are sustained. Accordingly, the decision of the Defendant Commissioner that Plaintiff was not disabled and, therefore, not entitled to benefits under the Social Security Act is reversed, and the captioned cause ordered remanded to the Commissioner for the immediate payment of benefits consistent with the Social Security Act.

In reviewing the Commissioner's decision, the Magistrate Judge's task is to determine if that decision is supported by "substantial evidence." 42 U.S.C. § 405(g). Under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(C), this Court, upon objections being made to the Magistrate Judge's Report and Recommendations, is required to make a de novo review of those recommendations of the report to which objection is made. This de novo review, in turn, requires this Court to re-examine all the relevant evidence, previously reviewed by the Magistrate Judge, to determine whether the findings of the Secretary [now Commissioner] are supported by "substantial evidence." Lashley v. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 708 F.2d 1048, 1053 (6th Cir. 1983); Gibson v. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, 678 F.2d 653, 654 (6th Cir. 1982). This Court's sole function is to determine whether the record as a whole contains substantial evidence to support the Commissioner's decision. The Commissioner's findings must be affirmed if they are supported by "such relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion." Richardson v. Perales, 402 U.S. 389, 401 (1971), citing Consolidated Edison Company v. NLRB,

305 U.S. 197, 229 (1938); Landsaw v. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 803 F.2d 211, 213 (6th Cir. 1986). Substantial evidence means such relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion. Richardson, *supra*, at 401; Ellis v. Schweicker, 739 F.2d 245, 248 (6th Cir. 1984). Substantial evidence is more than a mere scintilla, but only so much as would be required to prevent a directed verdict (now judgment as a matter of law) against the Commissioner if this case were being tried to a jury. Foster v. Bowen, 853 F.2d 483, 486 (6th Cir. 1988); NLRB v. Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company, 306 U.S. 292, 300 (1939). To be substantial, the evidence “must do more than create a suspicion of the existence of the fact to be established... [I]t must be enough to justify, if the trial were to a jury, a refusal to direct a verdict when the conclusion sought to be drawn from it is one of fact for the jury.” LeMaster v. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 802 F.2d 839, 840 (6th Cir. 1986), quoting NLRB v. Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company, *supra*.

In determining whether the Commissioner’s findings are supported by substantial evidence, the Court must consider the record as a whole. Hephner v. Mathews, 574 F.2d 359 (6th Cir. 1978); Ellis, *supra*; Kirk v. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 667 F.2d 524, 536 (6th Cir. 1981); Houston v. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 736 F.2d 365 (6th Cir. 1984); Garner v. Heckler, 745 F.2d 383 (6th Cir. 1984). However, the Court may not try the case *de novo*, resolve conflicts in evidence or decide questions of credibility. Garner, *supra*. The findings of the Commissioner of Social Security and proceedings on Claimant’s application for social security disability benefits are not subject to reversal merely because there exists in the record substantial evidence to support a different conclusion. Buxton v. Halter, Commissioner of Social Security, 246 F.3d 762 (6th Cir. 2001). If the Commissioner’s decision is supported by substantial

evidence, it must be affirmed, even if the Court as a trier of fact would have arrived at a different conclusion. Elkins v. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 658 F.2d 437, 439 (6th Cir. 1981).

In addition to the foregoing, in ruling as aforesaid, this Court makes the following, non-exclusive, observations:

1. For a myriad of reasons, more than adequately set forth by the Plaintiff in her Objections to the Magistrate Judge's Report and Recommendations (Doc. #12), this Court concludes that the Administrative Law Judge erred in rejecting the opinion of the Plaintiff's treating pain management specialist, Lita Mathai, M.D. Moreover, giving Dr. Mathai's opinion the weight it deserves as a longtime treating physician, the evidence of disability in the captioned cause is overwhelming or, at the very least, strong while contrary evidence is weak. Accordingly, a remand for the payment of benefits, rather than one for further administrative proceedings, is appropriate. Faucher v. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 17 F.3d 171, 176 (6th Cir. 1994).

WHEREFORE, based upon the aforesaid, this Court rejects the Report and Recommendations of the United States Magistrate Judge (Doc. #11) in their entirety, having concluded that the Commissioner's decision that Plaintiff was not disabled and, therefore, not entitled to benefits under the Social Security Act was not supported by substantial evidence. Plaintiff's Objections to said judicial filing (Doc. #12) are sustained. Judgment will be ordered entered in favor of the Plaintiff and against the Defendant Commissioner, reversing the decision of the Defendant Commissioner that Plaintiff was not disabled and, therefore, not entitled to benefits

under the Social Security Act, and remanding the captioned cause to the Defendant Commissioner for the payment of benefits consistent with the Social Security Act.

The captioned cause is hereby ordered terminated upon the docket records of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, Western Division, at Dayton.

March 10, 2014



---

WALTER H. RICE, JUDGE  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

Copies to:

Counsel of record